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Checks may be written to Bible Passages,
287 Beulah Road; Dripping Springs, TX 78620

Dear supporters and friends,

“Oh I see now, the Old Testament is sort of like a long story about a family,” said a prospect during a Bible study I conducted this past month. During the month of April, I was blessed to conduct several Bible studies with two college-age men who work in the Dripping Springs community. Dylan was attending worship because of Denny Williamson, one of the individuals who administered CPR to me on November 29, 2020. In turn, Dylan invited his friend Tanner, and on April 19th both of these sincere and dedicated young men were baptized into Christ. Dylan’s statement about the Old Testament could not have been more accurate, especially when we consider the New Testament story of the family of Christ to which he and Tanner both now belong. Indeed the family of God is a blessing, and we are privileged to see how, through the grace of God, souls are being added to the church, and how many more are continuing to write other stories of faith similar to those found in scripture. Just like Abraham, Sarah, Peter, Paul, Phoebe, and so many others of the biblical world, many today are walking with God through the path of life and finding strength in God’s marvelous family. To see God’s family grow and develop has been extremely rewarding. Whether at the Bear Valley Bible Institute, or at a teacher workshop and lecture series in Kentucky, or from news we receive from viewers of the Bible Land Passage videos, listeners to the Looking Up podcast, or participants in the Scripture writing ministry, we are thrilled to hear the *modern* day stories of God’s wonderful family.

One of those modern day stories of faith has come to us from one of our latest trips to Israel, where we were blessed to guide 37 souls through some of the most well-known and beloved sites of the Bible Lands. While we always try to learn more for instructional and filmmaking purposes about each of the sites we visit, by far the most rewarding part of our BLP ministry involves the people. Witnessing the reaction and the “ah ha” moments of travelers is joyous. When participants begin to understand the connections between what they read in scripture and what they experience in Israel, it forever adds to the way they read the Bible and will draw them closer to God. An example of this can be seen in one of the commendations we received from one of our most recent Bible Land Passage participants. Here are her comments: “I wanted to let you know my most meaningful moment on the trip...it was the Pool of Siloam. I really appreciated



Our wonderful group on the Sea of Galilee in March!



Bear Valley graduate and friend, Kolton Ballance, points out “Pa” (John) in the banner to Jackson at Lads to Leaders.



Our bus in Israel always displays the Bible Land Passages banner!



Our friend and guide in Israel, Tsvika Mizrahi. It is always on our mind to teach him and show him Jesus.

the devotional there. I think you never know what's going to touch you and those moments really can't be anticipated. They just happen. Our family had a very rough 2021-2022 with some horrible things that happened to a family member. It rocked my faith in a big way. We spent a year and a half pulling our child out of the wreckage, scrambling to come to terms with our faith in this wicked world. I couldn't even say "God is good" for about a year. It made my chest hurt to say it. Our child is doing much, much better now!! But, my faith, and my daily walk, has been changed. I wish I could go back to the way it was, and maybe that will still happen one day. But right now, I'm the blind man that was sent to the pool of Siloam, walking with faith, not quite knowing what's going to happen, how things are going to happen, but believing Jesus will work it all out for good. I loved all the stops we made on the trip. But my faith is

still wounded and hurting, and it was at that pool-- the way you told that story-- that made me think -- It's okay that my faith isn't perfect. It's okay and enough to blindly follow Jesus. Just keep following, keep believing, keep hoping. Anyhow, that's just where I'm at. An odd place in my walk. Thank you for illuminating that story in that way. I've never thought about the details of that blind man story in that way. I certainly never thought of myself as the blind man... Thank you for that story, and for everything you and Carla did on that trip!! We appreciate you!"

As you can see, it's this kind of testimony that encourages us to keep on organizing these kinds of trips to the Bible lands. We enjoy all the components of our ministry at Bible Passages, and trips to the Bible Lands are no different. Witnessing firsthand the impact this program has on fortifying the faith of the followers of Jesus is exciting. We like to say that this program isn't at all a vacation; it's a "church retreat on steroids". Throughout every day, we are in the word, discussing scripture, praying, singing, and encouraging one another in our Christian walk. Because of you and your support, we can conduct devotionals, deliver lectures, and gather film data and information for use in the Bible land documentaries and videos, and can likewise God can change lives and prepare souls for eternity. Thank you so much for all you do to make the work of both Bible Passages and Bible Land Passages possible. We appreciate so very, very much your prayers, love, and support. *John*

2023

Schedule:

May 6-11
(J&C) Focal Point
San Marcos, TX

May 12-14
(J&C) Men's & Ladies
Weekend
Richmond, KY

May thru July
WVBS Temple Project
Looking Up Podcast
Area Summer Series
Lessons

August-October 2023
Bear Valley Bible Institute

August 16-24, 2023
(J&C) Polishing the Pulpit

September 7-9, 2023
(C) CFYC retreat
Madill, OK

September 22-24
(J&C) Marriage Seminar
Tilton, NH

October 12-27, 2023
(J&C) Discovering the Bible
by Sea - Mediterranean
Cruise/Study Tour

November-December 2023
WVBS and other TX
projects

These three "CONNECTIONS" videos have been released from World Video Bible School. You can watch them, free, at this link: <https://video.wvbs.org/program/bible-land-passages-connections/>

HOW DID GOD WORK IN JOPPA?

GIDEON'S 300
BATTLE FOR THE AGES

SALT SEA
FINDING THE DEAD SEA
IN THE BIBLE.

Carla's Comments

Dear friends,

Multi-tasking. That's what's on my mind! This morning, while finishing up this monthly report (which has now become every-other-month, and we are praying our supporters will be okay with that,) I am at the same time prepping for a recording later this morning of our weekly podcast "Looking Up", jotting down notes for a couple of Focal Point lessons next week, making mental notes for a few lessons for a ladies day next weekend (and reeaalllly needing to make more than *mental* notes), and washing sheets to get rooms ready for guests staying with us for Focal Point. I can just hear my mom saying "Carla!" (which translated, means, "You're biting off more than you can chew, Carla!") She may be a teeny bit right—aren't moms always right? Don't tell her I said so. But, I am thankful for work to do, a purpose to fulfill, friends and co-workers to host, and the energy and desire to do these things. **Please know** I do not share this busy-ness for sympathy or pats on the back...I truly am not. In his prayers, John often thanks God for "the blessing of serving in ministry." I agree wholeheartedly. While I do sometimes feel a little overwhelmed, I mostly just feel gratitude for what we get to do on a daily basis. What a true blessing!!!

We arrived back to our Dripping Springs home base on John's birthday (March 9), and our boys and their families came a few days later to help us do more ice-storm cleanup. It was amazing how quickly and how much they were able to accomplish while working together. It was also good for our hearts to see them all together and get heart-filling squeezes from our five grandbabies. What a true blessing!!!

Our Israel study tour was wonderful. There were 39 of us from various places including the US, Canada, and even a couple of Israelis (Rod and Victoria Selman, who live temporarily in Beersheba!) The weather was cool, the wildflowers and green fields were absolutely gorgeous, and the fellowship and friendship were the best. Six of our group were from the 2020 trip that had to be canceled due to Covid, so we were so thankful that they were finally able to take the trip they'd planned for more than three years ago. Our local Israeli guide, as usual, was our friend Tsvika Mizrahi, who is still cancer-free after being diagnosed several years ago with stage four lung cancer. I can always tell that John is not just trying to teach our tour group, but so many times he is trying to reach Tsvika with truth, and we will continue that mission. We were able to worship with the church in Nazareth. We made what we know will be lifelong (and beyond!) relationships. We grew in faith and knowledge. What a true blessing!!!

We returned home on April 7 and spent a few days in jet-lag fog. Since then, we've visited with and babysat some of our kids/grandkids, spent some time with my Mom, celebrated Livi's first birthday, participated in a CPR training class, enjoyed visits with Peter and Pooifun Chin who were here from Singapore/Malaysia, as well as the Ihle family, former BV students and friends from Georgia, taught a few lessons in Bowling Green, Kentucky at the Equipped workshop, recorded a few more podcasts, and enjoyed doing some very cathartic outdoor yard work! (Was that a run-on sentence?) What a true blessing!!

We enjoy these blessings due to your love, prayers and many different forms of support. Thank you, thank you, thank you for helping us and for loving us. We are grateful for the blessing of YOU!! Love, *Carla*



(L-R): It's always special when personal friends travel with us to Israel - here are Buddy and Irmadean Martin (from San Marcos, TX)...we were so excited to get a special visit from former Bear Valley students Scott and Alexis Ihle with their kids Scottie, Samantha, and "G" (Garrison)...As of this writing, Kathy Pollard and I have recorded sixteen episodes of "Looking Up! With Kathy and Carla" and we're enjoying it!...also special - making new friends on Israel trips! Here are Brent and Karen Stephens from Louisiana!



Mar/Apr (l-r): we hosted the Bear Valley young adults right before we left Denver... with our friend Larry Eoff at the Nazareth church of Christ... John with Barry Grider and Neal and Carl Pollard at the Equipped conference... Tanner, Denny, Dylan and John - see John's letter for details about this wonderful evening... with Peter and Pooifun Chin, visiting from Singapore... Our Israel group in front of Mt. Tabor in Israel... on the bus at the beginning of the tour... John's lesson for the Teacher Workshop part of "Equipped" in Bowling Green, KY... part of our Israel group worshipping at the Nazareth congregation in March.